

# **Our hearts and minds: the deepest desire of our God**

As I prayed and asked God what message he would have me deliver today, he placed upon my heart a message about the hearts and minds of mankind. It is extremely important as children of God, that we stop and evaluate (test), from time to time, where our hearts and minds are in relation to our lives and the world around us and how it compares to scripture.

It seems that we are inundated with news and reports of increasing evil in the world. We hear of wars and rumors of wars, growing violence at home and in our societies, and the morality of the average person seems to be wavering and dropping into total iniquity. Ungodliness is being piped into our homes through television and the Internet. The level of evil and demonic activity is palpable to those who are sensitive to the Holy Spirit. We see our country here in America seeming to fall apart both in government, and the rule of law, where God has been systematically removed from any recognizable inclusion in our society. We see a widening separation between the average church's doctrines and theologies and the truth written and spoken in the word of God, where doctrine has replaced truth and theology has capitulated to sin and comfort of people in their sin. We see good being called evil and evil being called good, where those who obviously break the law and abuse others go without accountability. Those few who stand and resist the tides of iniquity are being persecuted and placed in prison for their beliefs. For those of us who were raised in a different time, we do not even recognize the world that we are living in, and it seems incomprehensible that things could have gotten this bad.

Scripture predicted all of this, and God teaches us in his word what we are to do to fight back and rescue those who are willing. We must remember that our God is first in all things! We must recognize that all these things we are seeing, are reactions of the Kingdom of darkness to the massive movements and preparations of almighty God! We must also recognize that this evil and iniquity we are seeing in this world is a secondary reaction to the true war that is raging in the spiritual realm. The war is between Yahweh, whose will it is to bring all nations back to Eden, and Satan who wants to delay his ultimate demise by stealing, killing, and destroying and to delay the Fullness of the Gentiles. Those of us who are followers and lovers of Jesus Christ are called to participate in this final battle and rescue the remaining few who will be called by the Holy Spirit. The struggle begins and ends with the hearts and minds of people.

1. Civilizations, societies, beliefs, religion, politics, culture, customs, traditions, ethics, morals, mores, and the actual course of human history:
  - Are all created and driven by the hearts and minds of mankind.
  - This is why kings, rulers, and governments pursued them to win nations, people's and countries from the beginning.
  - Pursuing the hearts and minds of people is a law of God, and those throughout history who sought to replace God, perverted his word and used his ways to do it.
  - The Holy Spirit teaches us **by contrast**. We know that a thing is of man or of God based on the fruit that it bears.

### **Matthew 7:15-20** ESV

#### A Tree and Its Fruit

15 “Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. 16 You will recognize them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? 17 So, every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit. 18 A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a diseased tree bear good fruit. 19 Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. 20 Thus you will recognize them by their fruits.

2. Perceptions, paradigms, and worldviews affect the heart and mind.
  - Identity and value are what God focuses on.
    - These manifest faith.
    - These are what Satan attacks and destroys.

### **Romans 8:17** ESV

17 and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.

### **1 Corinthians 2:16** ESV

16 “For who has understood the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?” But we have the mind of Christ.

- Ego and pride are what the world focuses on.
  - o These manifest selfishness.
  - o These are what God resists.

**Jeremiah 17:9** ESV

9 The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?

**James 4:6** ESV

6 But he gives more grace. Therefore, it says, “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.”

3. Our heart’s desire is to have a place to belong to, a tribe to belong to. This is how God made us.
  - We were made to serve.
  - We were made to worship.
    - o What we worship receives our time and attention.
4. How are our hearts manipulated?
  - Lies, fear, greed.

**John 8:44** ESV

44 You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

- Lust, pride of life.

**1 John 2:16** ESV

16 For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life[a]—is not from the Father but is from the world.

5. Why are our hearts and minds so important to God?

- Faith creates a surrendered heart and perpetuates it.

### **1 Samuel 16:7** ESV

7 But the Lord said to Samuel, "Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him. For the Lord sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart."

### **Hebrews 11:6** ESV

6 And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.

6. What does scripture teach us about our hearts and minds?

### **Heart: Our responsibility!**

1. **\*\*Proverbs 4:23\*\***: "Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life."

- You manage it, protect it, bridle it, open and close it.
- It is the doorway from which the power of God through faith, manifests in the physical.

2. **\*\*Matthew 15:18-19\*\***: "But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this defiles a person. For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander."

- It drives your words and actions.
- Without God it is only evil and will serve to kill, steal and destroy without God.

3. **\*\*Psalm 51:10\*\***: "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me."

- It can be cleaned by God and is used to resurrect a dead spirit.

4. **\*\*Jeremiah 17:9\*\***: "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?"

- It will lie to you and others. This is the essence of the heart and used by Satan, the father of all lies.

5. **\*\*Proverbs 3:5-6\*\***: "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths."

- We trust with our heart.
- It is influenced by our minds.
- It has to be redirected toward God in all our ways.

6. **\*\*Proverbs 27:19\*\***: "As in water face reflects face, so the heart of man reflects the man."

- God made it to be reviewed, pondered, evaluated and show us what lies within.

7. **\*\*Psalm 73:26\*\***: "My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever."

- God alone gives our hearts strength.
- It is evidence of how powerless we are in this world without God.

8. **\*\*Mark 12:30\*\***: "And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength."

- We love with our hearts.
- Our hearts can direct our souls and minds but are affected by our will.

9. **\*\*Proverbs 15:13\*\***: "A glad heart makes a cheerful face, but by sorrow of heart the spirit is crushed."

- It affects our physical appearance.
- It also directs and affects our spirits. Negatively, without the Holy Spirit.

**\*\*Psalm 37:4\*\***: "Delight yourself in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart."

- Our hearts are like spiritual vessels that we allow to be filled.
- God will place His desires in our hearts if we value and seek Him first in all things.

**Mind: Where our choices are made. It must be surrendered and directed!**

1. **\*\*Romans 12:2\*\***: "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect."
  - Our minds can be renewed and molded.
  - It can be measured and compared to God's will and wisdom, and thus revealing to us how we must repent to achieve each phase of spiritual growth into the good, then the acceptable, and then the perfect will of God.
  
2. **\*\*Philippians 4:8\*\***: "Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things."
  - What we think about, meditate on, is what we worship.
  - What we worship is what we give life to in our lives.
  - Intentional praise will redirect our minds.
  
3. **\*\*1 Peter 1:13\*\***: "Therefore, preparing your minds for action, and being sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ."
  - Our minds must be prepared.
  - We keep the state of our mind.
  - Our mind directs our hopes.
  - a. **\*\*Colossians 3:2\*\***: "Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth."
  
4. **\*\*Isaiah 26:3\*\***: "You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you because he trusts in you."
  - God's flood of blessings is released in our lives based on our diligence with our deliberate trust and thoughts of Him.

5. **Philippians 2:5**: "Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus."
  - Only through Jesus Christ are we able to share the same mind with other believers.
  - This effect of the community mind of Christ is evidence of the connection between the spiritual (faith), and the physical (manifestation of God's presence).
  
6. **2 Timothy 1:7**: "For God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control."
  - Evil spirits can overwhelm and influence the mind.
  - The Holy Spirit empowers our minds, fills it with love and helps us in self-control.
  
7. **Philippians 4:7**: "And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."
  - The peace of God is what guards our hearts and minds.
  - Our minds are unable to understand the effects of God's peace. This keeps us in faith.
  - Our hearts and minds are connected and have a symbiotic relationship.
  - a. **Proverbs 23:7**: "For as he thinks in his heart, so is he."
  
8. **Colossians 3:16**: "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God."
  - Discipleship of God's Word empowers intentional actions of praise with our minds, thus influencing gratitude in our hearts.

## 7. Wisdom

- Wisdom of God will always counter selfishness and pride.
- Wisdom of man will always be driven by selfishness and counter God's wisdom.

### **Proverbs 28:26 ESV**

26 Whoever trusts in his own mind is a fool, but he who walks in wisdom will be delivered.

### **Proverbs 8:10-11 ESV**

10 Take my instruction instead of silver, and knowledge rather than choice gold, 11 for wisdom is better than jewels, and all that you may desire cannot compare with her.

8. The answer to solving all of the issues in today's world is the same as it has always been, and that is to turn the heart and mind to Jesus Christ.

### **2 Chronicles 7:14 ESV**

14 if my people who are called by my name humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land.

- The first step is to do this in our own lives first.
- Then to help those God puts in our path daily.
- We must remember that the gospel is **"The Way"**!

### **Acts 9:1-2 ESV**

#### **The Conversion of Saul**

9 But Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest 2 and asked him for letters to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any belonging to **the Way**, men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem.



Conclusion:

A few final thoughts to close this sermon.

If you ask most people who say they are followers and lovers of Jesus Christ if they have made him their Lord and savior, they will say yes, but Jesus taught:

**Matthew 7:13-14 ESV**

13 “Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy[a] that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. 14 For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few.

We must remember that salvation is a gift that we can only receive but not earn. To make Jesus Christ our Lord means that we are willing to die for the gospel, making it the priority in our lives. This is a death that we must experience daily as Paul wrote. There may come a time where this death may be a physical death. The only way a person will reach that level of submission is by knowing God intimately and the love that we develop for him drives our submission and obedience in the face of tyranny, wickedness, and iniquity.

If one thinks and believes that they can live without God, they will try. Faith is for the purpose of serving God, not getting our needs met. When our hearts and minds are in alignment with the will of God, every day is a blessing. Then we see, hear, and feel the presence of God in us and all around us. Then, love is easy, and every fruit of the Holy Spirit is manifested in our lives.

I pray this for each of us in the days to come!